

For Afterschool Programs,
Summer Camps, Scout Troops, and
Community Education Organizations
working with youth ages 9-13



www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation

Learning to use the **Nutrition Facts Label** will help young people establish healthful eating habits that can last a lifetime. Engage the youth in your afterschool, summer or outdoor program today!

Dear Youth Program Leader:

Welcome to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's **Read the Label** Youth Outreach Campaign!

As you know, childhood overweight and obesity in America are trends that are of great concern. The *Read the Label* Campaign introduces young people to the **Nutrition Facts Label** and shows them how easy it can be to use this simple tool as their guide to making smart food choices.

Join FDA in helping kids make healthier food choices!

Youth leaders and community educators across the nation are working with young people (ages 8 to 13) to empower them in understanding what's on the label and how to integrate this information into their daily lives. *You* are in the ideal position to help kids adopt nutrition habits that can help them feel great, be active, and choose nutrient-rich foods for their growing bodies.

Helping them to understand the information that they can use to make healthful food choices will get kids excited about taking control of their own nutritional decisions. You'll be equipping them to "get their food facts first" and build healthier habits for a lifetime.

Get started today!

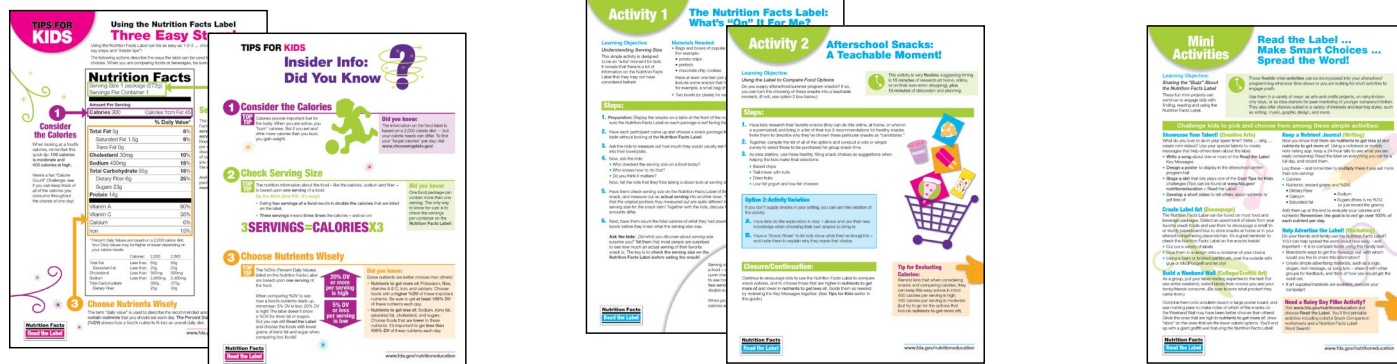
Everyday Ways You Can Help!

YOU can help spread the *Read the Label* message to the young people in your program – and beyond! Here's how:

- 1. Introduce the topic** by sharing the program's **key messages** (see Tips for Kids). Post them on the wall or print out/copy the pages to serve as a take-home piece.
- 2. Educate** afterschool program attendees, campers, scouts, and other youth about the **Nutrition Facts Label**. (See Activity 1)
- 3. Encourage** kids to use their label knowledge at home and in other "food"-related places! Invite them to use the *Read the Label* Cool Tips found at www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation under *Read the Label > For Kids*.
- 4. Provide information** to parents/caregivers whenever feasible. You can find parent materials at www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation under *Read the Label > For Families*.
- 5. Be a role model.** Demonstrate label reading during "teachable moments" like afterschool snack time or camping trips. (See Activity 2)
- 6. Engage kids as "ambassadors"** who can spread the word to families, friends and the community! (See Mini Activities)
- 7. Learn more** about Nutrition Facts Label at www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation
- 8. Go to** www.fda.gov/educationresource **library** and **sign up** for our bi-monthly News for Educators email!

Nutrition Facts
Read the Label

What's Inside:



Tips for Kids: Three Easy Steps!

Explains the program's key messages on Calories, Serving Size and Nutrients

Activities for Youth Groups

Two engaging projects that reinforce the nutrition messaging

Mini-Activities to Inspire Kids

Fun challenges suited to a variety of interests

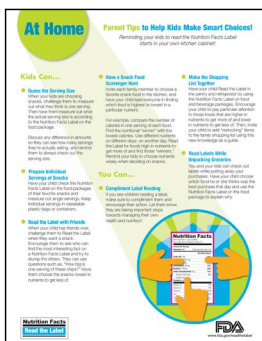
Additional Resources for You!

Downloadable versions of the *Read the Label* Youth Outreach Campaign program tools can be found under the Read the Label section at www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation. Share them with young people and their families!

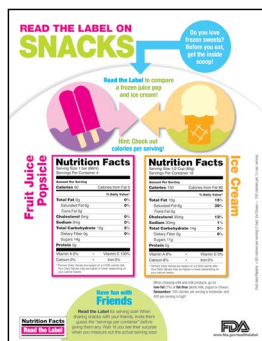
Here's what you'll find:



Cool Tips for Kids



Tips for Parents



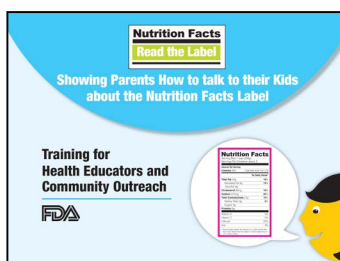
Snack Comparison Activities



Nutrition Facts Label Word Search



Read the Label Infographic



Powerpoint Presentation (to give you background on the program)

All family/handout materials are available in both English and Spanish.

Sources for Nutrition Information

The goal of the *Read the Label* Youth Outreach Campaign is to help you engage kids with the easy steps involved in reading the **Nutrition Facts Label**. It is not intended to offer specific nutritional advice.

If you are interested in learning more about nutrition and/or dietary or health-related questions, refer to:

- www.choosemyplate.gov
- www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation
- www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines



TIPS FOR KIDS

Using the Nutrition Facts Label Three Easy Steps!

Using the Nutrition Facts Label can be as easy as 1-2-3 ... once you know the following key steps and "insider tips"!

The Nutrition Facts Label is found on packaged foods and beverages. These actions describe the ways the label can be used to make healthful dietary choices. When you are comparing foods or beverages, be sure to follow these easy steps!

1

Consider the Calories

When looking at a food's calories, remember this quick tip: **100 calories is moderate and 400 calories is high.**

Here's a fun "Calorie Count" Challenge: see if you can keep track of *all* of the calories you consume throughout the course of one day!

2

Check Serving Size

The top of the Nutrition Facts Label shows the **serving size** and the **servings per container**. Knowing the servings per container lets you discover the total number of calories and nutrients you would get if you ate the entire package.

And remember: one package may contain **more than one serving!**

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 package (272g)
Servings Per Container 1

Amount Per Serving

Calories 300 Calories from Fat 45

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 5g	8%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	9%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 430mg	18%
Total Carbohydrate 55g	18%
Dietary Fiber 6g	25%
Sugars 23g	
Protein 14g	
Vitamin A	80%
Vitamin C	35%
Calcium	6%
Iron	15%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

3

Choose Nutrients Wisely

The term "daily value" is used to describe amounts of nutrients recommended for you to eat every day. The **Percent Daily Value (%DV)** tells you how much of a nutrient is in one serving of a food.

Nutrition Facts
Read the Label

TIPS FOR KIDS

Insider Info:

Did You Know



1 Consider the Calories

TOP TIP

Calories provide important fuel for the body. When you are active, you “burn” calories. But if you *eat and drink* more calories than you *burn*, you gain weight.



Did you know:

The information on the food label is based on a 2,000 calorie diet — but your calorie needs can differ. To find your “target calories” per day, visit www.choosemyplate.gov!

2 Check Serving Size

TOP TIP

The nutrition information about the food — like the calories, sodium and fiber — is based upon **one serving** of a food.

Do the Math (And P.S.: It's easy!)

- Eating **two servings of a food** results in **double the calories** that are listed on the label.
- **Three servings** means **three times** the calories — and so on!

Did you know:

One food package can contain more than one serving. The only way to know for sure is to check the servings per container on the **Nutrition Facts Label!**

3SERVINGS=CALORIESX3

3 Choose Nutrients Wisely

TOP TIP

The %DVs (Percent Daily Values) listed on the Nutrition Facts Label are based upon **one serving** of the food.

When comparing %DV to see how a food's nutrients stack up, remember: 5% DV is low; 20% DV is high!

20% DV or more per serving is high

5% DV or less per serving is low

Did you know:

Different nutrients play different roles in your diet!

- **Nutrients to get more of:** Potassium, fiber, vitamins A & C, iron, and calcium. Choose foods with a **higher %DV** of these important nutrients. Be sure to get **at least 100% DV** of these nutrients each day.
- **Nutrients to get less of:** Sodium, *trans* fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sugars. Choose foods that are **lower** in these nutrients. It's important to get **less than 100% DV** of these nutrients each day. The label doesn't show a %DV for *trans* fat or sugars. But you can still **Read the Label** and choose the foods with lower grams of *trans* fat and sugars when comparing two foods!

Nutrition Facts
Read the Label

www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation

The label doesn't show a %DV for *trans* fat or sugars. But you can

Activity 1

The Nutrition Facts Label: What's "On" It For Me?

Learning Objective:

Understanding Serving Size

This simple activity is designed to be an "a-ha" moment for kids. It reveals that there is a lot of information on the Nutrition Facts Label that they may not have considered before!

Materials Needed:

- Bags and boxes of popular snack foods, placed on a table. For example:
 - potato chips
 - pretzels
 - chocolate chip cookies
 - nacho chips
 - crackers
 - popcorn
- Have at least one item per participant and be sure to try to include some snacks that have *unexpected servings sizes* – for example, a small bag of chips that contains three servings.
- Two bowls (or plates) for each participant



This activity can be conducted within a **15 to 20 minute** timeframe, including time for followup discussion.

Steps:

- 1. Preparation:** Display the snacks on a table at the front of the room, making sure the Nutrition Facts Label on each package is *not* facing the kids!
- 2.** Have each participant come up and choose a snack package from the table without looking at the **Nutrition Facts Label**.
- 3.** Ask the kids to measure out how much they would usually eat for a snack into their bowl/plate.
- 4.** Now, ask the kids:
 - Who checked the serving size on a food today?
 - Who knows how to do that?
 - Do you think it matters?Now, tell the kids that they'll be taking a closer look at serving size!
- 5.** Have them check serving size on the Nutrition Facts Label of their chosen snack, and measure out an **actual serving** into another bowl. *They'll likely find that the original portions they measured out are quite different from the actual serving size for the snack item!* Together with the kids, discuss how the two amounts differ.
- 6.** Next, have them calculate the total calories of what they had poured into their bowls before they knew what the serving size was.

Ask the kids: *Did what you discover about serving size surprise you?* Tell them that most people are surprised to see how much an actual serving of their favorite snack is. The key is to **check the serving size on the Nutrition Facts Label before eating the snack!**



Why Serving Size Is Important

Serving size matters because *all* of the nutritional information about a food – such as calories, %DV of saturated fat, sodium, etc. – are based upon one serving of that food! So, you need to check serving size to see how many servings you are *really* eating. Because if you eat **two servings** – you are getting double the calories, double the saturated fat ... double everything!

When you don't know the serving size, it is very easy to take in more calories and fat than you think!

Nutrition Facts
Read the Label

Activity 2

Afterschool Snacks: A Teachable Moment!

Learning Objective:

Using the Label to Compare Food Options

Do you supply afterschool/summer program snacks? If so, you can turn the choosing of these snacks into a teachable moment. (If not, see option 2 box below.)



This activity is very **flexible**; suggested timing is **15 minutes** of research (at home, online, or on their own when shopping), **plus 15 minutes** of discussion and planning.

Steps:

1. Have kids research their favorite snacks (they can do this online, at home, or when in a supermarket) and bring in a list of their top 5 recommendations for healthy snacks. Invite them to describe why they've chosen these particular snacks as "candidates."
2. Together, compile the list of all of the options and conduct a vote or simple survey to select those to be purchased for group snack time.
3. As idea starters, use these healthy, filling snack choices as suggestions when helping the kids make final selections:
 - Baked chips
 - Trail mixes with nuts
 - Dried fruits
 - Low-fat yogurt and low-fat cheeses



Option 2: Activity Variation

If you don't supply snacks in your setting, you can use this variation of the activity:

- A. Have kids do the exploration in step 1 above and use their new knowledge when choosing their *own* snacks to bring in.
- B. Have a "Snack Share" to let kids show what they've brought in – and invite them to explain why they made that choice.

Closure/Continuation:

Continue to encourage kids to use the Nutrition Facts Label to compare snack options, and to choose those that are higher in **nutrients to get more of** and lower in **nutrients to get less of**. Guide them as needed by reviewing the Key Messages together. (See **Tips for Kids** earlier in this guide.)

Tip for Evaluating Calories:

Remind kids that when considering snacks and comparing calories, they can keep this easy advice in mind:

- 400 calories per serving is high
- 100 calories per serving is moderate (but try to go for the options that include **nutrients to get more of**!).

Nutrition Facts
Read the Label

Mini Activities

Read the Label ... Make Smart Choices ... Spread the Word!

Learning Objective:

Sharing the “Buzz” About the Nutrition Facts Label

These fun mini-projects can continue to engage kids with finding, reading and using the Nutrition Facts Label.



These **flexible mini-activities** can be incorporated into your afterschool/summer programming whenever time allows or you are looking for short activities to engage youth.

Use them in a variety of ways: as arts-and-crafts projects, on rainy/indoor-only days, or as idea-starters for peer-mentoring of younger campers/children. They also offer choices suited to a variety of interests and learning styles, such as writing, music, graphic design, and more.

Challenge kids to pick and choose from among these simple activities:

Showcase Your Talent! (Creative Arts)

What do you love to do in your spare time? Write ... sing ... create mini videos? Use your special talents to create messages that help others learn about the label.

- **Write a song** about one or more of the **Read the Label** Key Messages you’ve learned about
- **Design a poster** to display in the afterschool center/program hall
- **Stage a skit** that role plays one of the downloadable **Cool Tips for Kids** challenges (These can be found at www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation > Read the Label)
- **Develop a short video** to tell others about nutrients to get less of

Create Label Art (Découpage)

The Nutrition Facts Label can be found on most food and beverage packages. Collect an assortment of labels from your favorite snack foods and use them to découpage a small tin or sturdy paperboard box to store snacks at home or in your afterschool/gathering place kitchen. It’s a great reminder to check the Nutrition Facts Label on the snacks inside!

- Cut out a variety of labels
- Glue them in a design onto a container of your choice
- Using a foam or bristled paintbrush, coat the outside with glue or ModPodge® and let dry!

Build a Weekend Wall (Collage/Graffiti Art)

As a group, put your label-reading expertise to the test! For one entire weekend, collect labels from snacks you and your family/friends consume. (Be sure to note what products they came from.)

Combine them onto a bulletin board or large poster board, and use marking pens to make notes of which of the snacks on the Weekend Wall may have been better choices than others! Circle the ones that are high in **nutrients to get more of**; draw “stars” on the ones that are the lower calorie options. You’ll end up with a giant graffiti wall featuring the Nutrition Facts Label!

Keep a Nutrient Journal (Writing)

Now you know that there are **nutrients to get less of** and **nutrients to get more of**. Using a notebook or mobile note-taking app, keep a 24-hour tally to see what you are *really* consuming! Read the label on everything you eat for a full day, and record the information.

Log these – and remember to **multiply them** if you eat more than one serving!

- Calories
- Nutrients: (record grams and %DV)
 - Dietary Fiber
 - Calcium
 - Saturated fat
 - Sodium
 - Sugars (there is no %DV, so just record the grams)

Add them up at the end to evaluate your calories and nutrients! **Remember: the goal is to get at least 100% DV of dietary fiber and calcium, and less than 100% DV of saturated fat and sodium per day.**

Help Advertise the Label! (Marketing)

Do your friends and family use the Nutrition Facts Label? YOU can help spread the word about how easy – and important – it is to compare foods using this handy tool.

- Brainstorm ways to get the message out: with whom would you like to share this information?
- Create simple advertising materials, such as a logo, slogan, text message, or song lyric – share it with other groups for feedback, and think of how you would get the word out.
- If art supplies/materials are available, execute your campaign!

Need a Rainy Day Filler Activity?

Visit www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation and choose **Read the Label**. You’ll find printable activities including colorful Snack Comparison worksheets and a Nutrition Facts Label Word Search!